

Message Text

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16

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FM AMCONSUL AUCKLAND
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 615
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HAWAII

UNCLAS AUCKLAND 0211

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJ: REIMBURSEMENT FOR MAC TRANSPORTATION

REF: FORM DS4 TOKYO (KAWAMOTO) TO WELLINGTON, MARCH 23

1. CONSULATE GENERAL HAS, AFTER CONSIDERABLE SEARCHING, LOCATED ROBERT MCINTYRE AND GARRY GREEN, NOW RESIDING IN THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT. MCINTYRE (CANADIAN) AND GREEN (NEW ZEALANDER) WERE AIRLIFTED BY MAC FROM MARCUS ISLAND TO YOKOTA ON OCTOBER 16, 1975, AFTER BEING SHIPWRECKED, RESCUED BY A RUSSIAN WHALING VESSEL, AND TAKEN TO MARCUS.
2. SUBJECT COMMUNICATION REQUESTED US TO SEEK REIMBURSEMENT OF 51.00 PER PERSON FOR MAC AIRLIFT TRANSPORTATION COSTS.
3. MCINTYRE AND GREEN CALLED AT CONSULATE GENERAL AND DISCUSSED CASE WITH PRINCIPAL OFFICER. WHILE ADMITTING THAT THE AMOUNT OF REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTED IS SMALL, BOTH FELT THAT PAYMENT IS NOT JUSTIFIED SINCE THEY WERE, AS THEY PUT IT, STILL IN THE PROCESS OF BEING RESCUED FROM A MARITIME DISASTER, AND ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, SHOULD NOT BE ASKED TO PAY RESCUE COSTS. THEY POINTED OUT THAT THEY FLEW TO YOKOTA ON A REGULAR WEEKLY SUPPLY FLIGHT, WHICH DID NOT CAUSE ANY ADDED EXPENSES TO U.S.G.
4. THEY EMPHASISED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD TREATED THEM VERY GENEROUSLY - AS DID THE U.S. COAST GUARD STATION AT MARCUS

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AND THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF ANY REIMBURSEMENT.

5. MR. MCINTYRE SAYS HE IS WRITING A BOOK ON THEIR ADVENTURE AND HAS PROMISE OF PUBLICATION IN NEW ZEALAND. HE INDICATED HE PLANS TO SPEAK HIGHLY OF THE MARCUS ISLAND COAST GUARD STATION.

5. WHETHER JUSTIFIED OR NOT, THESE TWO MEN OBVIOUSLY FEEL THAT HAVING TO PAY THE REIMBURSEMENT WOULD LEAVE SOUR TASTES IN THEIR MOUTHS OVER EXPERIENCE WITH U.S.G. IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR RESCUE. THEY CLEARLY INTEND TO TRY TO RECOUP SOME OF THEIR LOSSES BY PUBLICIZING THEIR ADVENTURE. WHILE THEIR ATTITUDE WAS NOT THREATENING OR UNPLEASANT IN ANY WAY, IF WE WERE TO PURSUE THE MATTER OF REIMBURSEMENT FOR A TOTAL OF \$102.00 IT WOULD VERY LIKELY LEAD TO THEIR MAKING THAT AN ISSUE IN THEIR BOOK RATHER THAN CONCENTRATING ON THE FAVOURABLE ASPECTS OF THEIR CONTACTS WITH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.
IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THIS CASE BE CONSIDERED FROM THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS STANDPOINT AS WELL AS THE FISCAL STANDPOINT, AND THAT THE REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT BE DROPPED.

WILLIAMS

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